UMMUL MOMINEEN

JUWAIRIYYA

BINT AL HARITH ABU DHARAR

جويريه بِنت الحارث بن أبي ضرار رضئ الله تعالى عنها

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UMMUL MOMINEEN JUWAIRIYYA BINT AL-HARITH ABU DHARAR

(رضئ الله تعالى عنہا)

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بِسم الله الرحمنِ الرحيم

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلاة والسلام على
سيدنا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه أجمعين

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(رضئ الله تعالى عنہا)

EARLY LIFE

In the harsh yet tribal nobility-steeped landscapes of pre-Islamic Arabia, a girl was born into the house of one of the most prominent tribal leaders of the time—al-Harith ibn Abi Dirar, the chieftain of Banu al-Mustaliq. She was named Barrah, a name considered in the meaning as "pious" or "righteous," though the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) would later rename her Juwairiyyah, a name that carried affection and gentleness. Her full name would come to be known as Juwairiyyah bint al-Harith ibn Abi Dirar al-Khuzaiyyah (رضئ الله تعالى عنہا), and her lineage traced back to the noble Khuza'ah tribal confederation, well-regarded among the Arab tribes for its strategic location, alliances, and command.

The exact year of her birth is not precisely documented, as is common with many figures of early Islam, but scholars place it around 15–20 years before Hijrah, making her a young adult by the time of her encounter with the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم).

Her tribe, Banu al-Mustaliq, resided in the region of the Hejaz, near the coast of the Red Sea, to the north of Makkah. As the daughter of the tribal chief, Juwairiyyah (رضئ الله تعالى عنہا) would have grown up amidst wealth, influence, and traditional honor, raised with the expectations that

came with being a noblewoman. Her upbringing likely included the customs and social etiquette of tribal aristocracy. She would have been trained in oratory, lineage knowledge, hospitality, and the responsibilities of managing the domestic and political needs of a chief's household. Such women in pre-Islamic Arabia were often politically astute and socially aware, especially when they belonged to ruling families. It is not unreasonable to assume that Juwairiyyah (رضئ الله تعالى عنہا) was well-versed in tribal affairs and had developed a sense of personal dignity and intelligence early on.

Little is known of her early personal life beyond the political landscape that surrounded her. Her tribe was known for its strength and self-reliance, and they held a degree of hostility toward the early Muslim community, whom they viewed as disrupting the traditional power dynamics of Arabia. At the time, Islam had not yet penetrated deeply into the tribal belts controlled by the likes of Banu al-Mustaliq, and so Juwairiyyah (رضئ الله تعالى عنہا) was likely raised in the pagan polytheistic tradition that dominated Arabia before Islam.

In her youth, she was married to Musafi ibn Ṣafwan, a member of her tribe. The marriage was politically appropriate, aligning with the customs of intertribal consolidation. Yet this period of her life, one of expected prosperity and status, was soon to be changed by the rapidly changing currents of history. With the rise of Islam in Madinah and the eventual tensions between the Muslim polity and Banu al-Mustaliq, the course of her life was about to take a decisive turn—one that would remove her from the courts of tribal leadership and bring her into the illuminated household of prophethood.

Though she could not have imagined it at the time, the trials she would soon face would become the very path by which she would attain the highest of honors—becoming one of the Mothers of the Believers.

By the time she reached adulthood, the Muslim polity in Madinah had begun expanding its influence across the Arabian Peninsula. Tensions between the Muslim state and several tribes—especially those aligned with the Quraish or those seeing the Muslims as a rising force to be checked—led to frequent skirmishes. Among these conflicts, the Banu al-Mustaliq, under Juwairiyyah's father, began preparing for what they believed would be a necessary confrontation to curb the Muslim expansion.

Reports collected by Ibn Ishaq and later cited by al-Waqidi and Ibn Sa'd, indicate that intelligence reached the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) that Banu al-Mustaliq was amassing forces with the intent to attack Madinah. In response, the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) mobilized a defensive expedition and met the forces of al-Harith at Muraysi, a watering place near the coast, in what became known as the Battle of al-Muraysiʿ (5 AH / 627 CE).

The battle was brief but decisive. The Muslims, by Allah's decree, emerged victorious. Many of the Banu al-Mustaliq's warriors were killed, including Musafi ibn Ṣafwan, the husband of Juwairiyyah (رضئ الله تعالى عنہا). The tribe's women and children were taken captive, as was the prevailing rule in Arabian tribal warfare.

Among the captives taken that day was Juwairiyyah (رضئ الله تعالى عنہا). This moment, the fall from noblewoman to prisoner, marks the sharpest turn in her life's trajectory. She was assigned to Thabit ibn Qays ibn Shammas (رضئ الله تعالى عنه), a Companion of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم), as part of the spoils of war.

Yet, unlike many others in her situation, Juwairiyyah (رضئ الله تعالى عنہا) did not resign herself to her condition. Drawing upon her noble upbringing and self-possession, she sought to negotiate her freedom through the Islamic mechanism of mukatabah—a contract by which slaves could purchase their liberty.

With dignity, she approached Thabit (رضئ الله تعالى عنه) and arranged to buy her own freedom. Once the contract was agreed upon, she took a bold and unprecedented step: she requested an audience with the Apostle of Allah (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم). With poise and courage, she stood before him, explained her situation, and asked for his help in fulfilling her emancipation.

The Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) listened to her plea with compassion and foresight. Recognizing not only her personal virtue but the significance of her lineage, the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) responded with a gesture of extraordinary compassion and strategic foresight—he (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) offered to pay her ransom himself and, thereafter, proposed marriage.

This proposal was more than an act of individual mercy. It would become a strategic gesture of reconciliation that would alter the course of tribal relations across the region. The woman who had entered the Muslim camp as a prisoner would leave it as a wife of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم), and her people would soon follow her path—not as captives, but as allies.

This phase of her life, marked by sudden loss and unexpected elevation, revealed the depth of her character. She did not lose her composure in adversity, nor did she allow grief to paralyze her. Instead, she acted decisively and with faith, not knowing that her trials would lead her to the most honored station a woman could attain in Islam: that of Ummul Momineen—Mother of the Believers.

The Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) was no stranger to compassion in the face of conquest. Time and again, he demonstrated that victory in Islam was not to be measured by humiliation of the defeated but by their reformation and reintegration. Among the most luminous examples of this principle is the story of his marriage to Juwairiyyah bint al-Harith (رضئ الله تعالى عنہا)—a marriage that transformed tribal animosity into collective embrace of Islam.

Juwairiyyah (رضئ الله تعالى عنہا) accepted the Prophet's (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) offer. The marriage was conducted with her consent, and what began as a plea for assistance became a sacred bond that elevated her to the station of Ummul Momineen—Mother of the Believers. According to narrations preserved by Ibn Sa'd and Ibn Hajar, her mahr (bridal gift) was her emancipation itself, a gift that signaled not only her personal freedom but the restoration of her honor in a society that valued lineage and status.

The immediate social impact of this marriage was profound. The Companions, upon hearing that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) had married a woman from the captives of Banu al-Mustaliq,

responded not merely with congratulations but with a spontaneous act of collective mercy. They began to release all the captives from that tribe, saying, *"How can we keep as slaves the in-laws of the Apostle of Allah (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم)?"*

It is reported in al-Mustadrak of al-Hakim and confirmed by Ibn Hajar that nearly one hundred families were freed that day. In a single act, a woman's personal liberation had become the key to her people's collective redemption.

The marriage also softened the heart of her father, al-Harith ibn Abi Dirar, who soon embraced Islam after approaching the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم). Witnessing both the justice and the generosity extended to his daughter, he recognized that the man his tribe had sought to fight was no ordinary leader—he was, indeed, an Apostle of Allah.

This marriage reflected something deeply human and prophetic: a commitment to restoring the dignity of a woman who had lost everything, and in doing so, transforming her into a source of barakah for her people.

Juwairiyyah (رضئ الله تعالى عنها), who once entered the Muslim camp as a prisoner of war, now emerged not only as a wife of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم), but also as a symbol of Islam's ability to raise and redeem. Her life was about to take a turn toward devotion, scholarship, and quiet remembrance in the house of prophethood.

LIFE AS WIFE OF THE PROPHET (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم)

After her elevation from captivity to the revered station of Ummul Momineen, Juwairiyyah bint al-Harith (رضئ الله تعالى عنها) entered the household of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) with grace and quiet strength. Though her marriage was born from a moment of defeat for her people, it was transformed by the mercy of Islam into a lifetime of dignity, remembrance, and proximity to prophethood. Juwairiyyah (رضئ الله تعالى عنها) led a life marked by deep spiritual devotion and inward stillness.

From the outset, she adapted herself to the Prophet's (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) modest lifestyle. Gone were the regal comforts of a chieftain's home, replaced now by the humble simplicity of the household of Allah's final Apostle (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم). Yet there is no record of complaint from her, nor any suggestion that she lamented the transition. Rather, she embraced her new life with serenity, focusing on worship, remembrance, and reflection.

What distinguished her most among the mothers of the Believers was her remarkable devotion to dhikr, the remembrance of Allah. The most widely transmitted hadith about her, reported in Sahih Muslim, comes from an instance in which the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) passed by her one morning after Fajr prayer and found her sitting quietly in the same place where she had been after completing her prayer. Hours later, when he returned, she was still seated, engaged in

remembrance. The Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) said to her: *"Have you been sitting here since I left you?"* She replied, *"Yes."*

He (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) then taught her words of dhikr that, if said three times, would surpass all that she had been reciting throughout the morning: *"Subḥān Allāh wa bi-ḥamdi-hi, 'adada khalqi-hi, wa riḍā nafsihi, wa zinata 'arshi-hi, wa midāda kalimātihi."* (Glory is to Allah and praise is to Him, by the number of His creations by His pleasure, by the weight of His Throne, and by the ink of His words.)

This hadith illustrates not only her commitment to remembrance but also the Prophet's (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) affection and personal attention to her spiritual growth. She had not merely entered his household as a symbolic bride; she was a companion on the journey of faith, someone who took seriously the inner disciplines of the soul.

Juwairiyyah (رضئ الله تعالى عنها) maintained a reserved presence in the Prophet's (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) life, never at the center of political affairs or social controversies but never absent either. Her very demeanor reinforced her character: poised, composed, and more contemplative than vocal. It was said that she had a dignified bearing and carried herself with the quiet confidence of someone who had witnessed both the heights of worldly status and the humility of hardship.

Her presence in the household also carried strategic importance for the Muslim community. Her marriage had already led to the manumission of over a hundred captives. But beyond that, it created a lasting alliance between the Muslims and the tribe of Banu al-Mustaliq, many of whom embraced Islam following her marriage. Her influence, then, was not measured by the volume of her public speech, but by the sweep of her impact—both spiritually and socially.

She remained faithful and devoted to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) until his passing. Like the other Mothers of the Believers, she bore the grief of losing him with patience and dignity and chose to remain unmarried for the rest of her life, as was divinely ordained for the wives of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم). In doing so, she embodied the honor of being not merely a wife, but a symbol of motherhood to the entire ummah.

The death of the Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) marked a profound shift in the lives of those who had lived closest to him. For the Mothers of the Believers, the responsibility of safeguarding his memory, embodying his teachings, and remaining paragons of piety became a lifelong commitment. Juwairiyyah bint al-Harith (رضئ الله تعالى عنها) was among those who lived long after the passing of the Apostle (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم), and she continued to uphold this role with quiet dignity, retreating from the affairs of the world while remaining a revered figure in the early Muslim community.

LATER LIFE AND DEATH

In the years that followed the Prophet's (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) death, Juwairiyyah (رضئ الله تعالى عنها) chose a life of simplicity, privacy, and devotion. Her natural disposition inclined her toward a reserved and contemplative lifestyle. She preferred the inner life of remembrance and withdrawal from the arena of social influence. Nevertheless, her presence remained a source of blessing and legitimacy for the young Muslim society.

She lived through the rule of the Rightly Guided Caliphs—Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali (رضي الله تعالى عنهم)—and witnessed the rapid expansion of Islam across the Arabian Peninsula and into the Persian and Byzantine empires. During these decades, the Ummah faced both triumph and trial, yet Juwairiyyah remained untouched by the political turbulence, focused instead on her spiritual commitments and her role as one of the symbolic matriarchs of the Muslim community.

Her home in Madinah became a site of respect and reverence. The people of the city treated her with the honor due to one who had shared the most intimate aspects of life with the Apostle of Allah (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم). Though she transmitted only a few Ahadith, her reported devotion to dhikr remained an inspiration to those who came after her. Scholars and students alike would visit the homes of the Prophet's (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) wives not only to gain knowledge, but to connect with the living memory of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) who had transformed the Arabian world.

Juwairiyyah (رضئ الله تعالى عنها) passed away during the rule of Muawiyah ibn Abu Sufyan (رضئ الله تعالى عنه), with most scholars placing her death in the year 50 AH (670 CE). Her age at the time is estimated to have been in her mid-60s. Her passing was marked by respect and solemnity, and she was buried in the blessed graveyard of Jannat al-Baqi, where many of the Prophet's (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) family members, companions, and other wives were laid to rest.

Her life story remains one of the most compelling examples of how Islam restores honor, heals conflict, and redefines greatness. She entered the fold of Islam through trial yet lived out her days in the company of prophethood and the mercy of divine guidance. From the daughter of a tribal chieftain and a war captive, she rose to become a mother of the Believers.